



PLASMA RICH in GROWTH FACTORS (PRGF) FAQ's

Q: What is PRGF?

A: Plasma rich in growth factors (PRGF) is made by concentrating the patient's growth factor concentration that is found in the regular blood to a greater concentration.

Q: How does PRGF work?

A: When the growth factors are injected to the site of injury, they stimulate blood flow and signal cells crucial in the healing process to migrate to the site of injury. These "healing" signals generate new tissue through matrix formation, which is considered the "groundwork" of all soft tissue. This ultimately can help heal injured tendons and ligaments in the soft tissues as well as bony injuries, and can help heal cartilage by improving the biologic environment inside an arthritic joint.

Q: What does PRGF treat?

A: Painful tendons, ligaments, muscles, cartilage and even nerves. Ex: Arthritis, ligament/muscle/tendon tears, and nerve injuries.

Q: How many treatments are needed?

A: We start with 1 treatment and see how well things heal. Sometimes a repeat treatment may be needed depending on the severity of the injury. PRGF can truly heal injured tendons but may only help arthritis for 1-2 years.

Q: How soon will I see effects of PRGF treatment?

A: This depends on the exact diagnosis and extent of degeneration. After the initial flare-up, it can take weeks to months to see optimal results. Repeat treatments may be needed depending on how well one heals. Ongoing improvement may be seen up to 6-9 months, some studies suggest up to a year.

Q: What are the pre-procedure instructions?

A: Stay off any non-steroidal/anti-inflammatory medications 1 week prior to procedure and 2-4 weeks after the procedure. These include: *ibuprofen, naproxen, aspirin, advil, motrin*. Tylenol or narcotics can be used as a substitute before or after the procedure.

- Drink plenty of water. We recommend a minimum of 16 oz before blood draw and that you have someone drive you home.



Q: What does the procedure consist of? Does it hurt?

A: • An ultrasound is taken of the affected area to make sure that PRGF is the correct treatment.

- 60-120cc's of blood are drawn from the arm and put into the centrifuge, which spins the blood at 3-5G's of force
- A small amount of local anesthetic is used to numb the area and is also placed within the PRGF.
- Total time of the procedure should be no longer than 1 hour. This includes the blood processing. The injection itself takes only a few minutes, depending on the number of sites treated.
- The injection is performed under image guidance to ensure the entire injury is treated
- Like any injection, this procedure involves some discomfort. Local anesthesia is used during the actual application of PRGF to reduce pain. Following the procedure, your physician typically prescribes medication for pain.

Q: What should I expect after the procedure? Any limitations?

A: You may experience redness, swelling and discomfort after the procedure. You may apply ice or heat to the area for 15 minutes every 1-2 hours for the first 48 hours. By day 5, symptoms should begin to resolve significantly. Rarely, some may experience soreness up to 2 weeks. Limit the activity related to the injection site to activities of daily living for 1-2 days, but can do gentle range of motion exercises. Joint loading and impact will be restricted based on the issue being treated and can range from 2-8 weeks. In most cases, your physician will recommend physical therapy to optimize the outcomes of the procedure.

Q: Will insurance cover the cost of my procedure?

A: Unfortunately, most insurance companies still consider PRGF too new of a treatment to be covered. However, rarely insurance companies are recognizing the value of PRGF treatments and providing patients with reimbursement. Please check with your insurance provider for more information. You will be refunded any payments your insurer makes.

Q. How will I know that I am responding to treatment?

A: There are a variety of measures that can be used to measure progress. While pain improvement may be part of the ultimate goal, it is often not an objective way to measure progress. Initially, strength and stability followed by an improvement in function are most common. Improved functional movement and tissue healing then hopefully leads to a significant reduction in pain.